RAFT

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

THE HAUNT OF FEAR®

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

NO. 23
FEBRUARY

10¢

FEATURING...

THE OLD WITCH

THE VAULT-KEEPER

THE CRYPT-KEEPER

GHASTLY

SO WHAT? SO YOU, TOO, CAN JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!

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THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB
ROOM 706
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NEW YORK 12, N.Y.

SO, ALL RIGHT! SO HERE'S MY TWO BITS. SO MAKE ME A MEMBER, ALREADY, AND SEND ME THE THINGS AND STUFF LIKE WHAT THE KID UP THERE GOT... SO!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE NO. _____

STATE _____

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THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

NEE, HEE! SO YOU GOT YOUR *GRIMY PAWS* ONE ONE OF YOUR *OLD MAN'S DIMES*, BOUGHT MY *MUCK-MAG*, AND NOW YOU'RE HUNGRY FOR ANOTHER *SLIME-SERVING* FROM MY *CAULDRON* HERE IN *THE HAUNT OF FEAR*, EH? WELL, TUCK YOUR *DROOL CUPS* UNDER YOUR *DOUBLE CHINS*, KNOT YOUR *NAPKINS* AROUND YOUR *NUBBY NECKS*, AND YOUR *DELIRIUM DIETICIAN*, YOUR *REEKING-RESTAURATEUR*, YOUR *MORBID-MENU-MAKER*, *THE OLD WITCH*, WILL DISH OUT ANOTHER OF HER *REVOLTING RECIPES*. *READY? GOOD!* THEN HERE GOES WITH THE *NAUSEATING NOVELETTE I CALL...*

CREEP COURSE

STELLA'S FURNISHED ROOM WASN'T VERY FAR FROM THE UNIVERSITY. IN FACT, FROM HER FRONT WINDOW, SHE COULD SEE THE TOWER OF MEMORIAL HALL RISING ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS. SHE'D HURRIED THE FEW BLOCKS FROM THE CAMPUS, FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR, TOSSED HER BOOKS ON A CHAIR, AND NOW SHE STOOD GAZING OUT OVER THE COLLEGE TOWN AND SMILING A TRIUMPHANT SMILE...

STELLA TURNED AND GRINNED AT HER REFLECTION IN THE FULL-LENGTH MIRROR ON THE CLOSET DOOR. SHE ETED HER BALLERINA SHOES, HER FULL SKIRT, HER TIGHT-FIT TINS SWEATER, AND SHE SHOOK HER READ...

UH-UH! NO SIR! THIS OUTFIT IS OKAT FOR *PERKING* A PROF'S INTEREST DURING THE DAT, BUT NOW THAT I'VE SEEN INVITED TO AN *EVE-NING* SESSION...

STELLA SWUNG OPEN THE CLOSET AND UNHOOKED HER VERT SEST STRAPLESS FROM THE RACK...

...IT'S TIME TO ROLL OUT THE *BIG GUNS!*

HI, STELLA *SAY!* WHERE ARE *YOU* GOING?

IT WAS MITZI, STELLA'S ROOMMATE. SHE CROSSED THE SMALL ROOM AND FINGERED THE EVENING GOWN

GOT A *HEAVY DATE* TONIGHT, MITZI!

IT ISN'T A *BLIND* DATE, I HOPE. I WOULDN'T *FOOL AROUND* WITH ANY *BLIND DATE* THESE DAYS!

STELLA SCOFFED...

OH, *CUT IT*, MITZI. SO A *FEW STUDENTS DISAPPEAR FROM THE CAMPUS.* IS *THAT* ANT REASON TO START UGLT RUMORS ABOUT *MANIACS* AND *MURDERERS* AND STUFF LIKE THAT?!

I DIDN'T *START* THE *RUMORS*, STELLA. I'M JUST *REPEATING* WHAT I *HEARD. WHO'S THE GUY?*

WELL... IF YOU PROMISE NOT TO *TELL!* IT'S... *PROFESSOR FIHLEY!*

PROFESSOR *FINLEY!?* THE *'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' TEACHER?!* ARE *YOU* OUT OF TOUR *MIND?* WHT, HE'S AN *OLD CREEP!*

HE MAT SE AN *OLD CREEP*, MITZ, BUT IF I OON'T *PASS* 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION', I DON'T *GRADUATE.* AND WHAT *I KNOW* ABOUT *ANCIENT CIVILIZATION* WOULDN'T FILL A *THIMBLE.*

OH, *I GET IT!* GONNA *VAMP* 'IM, EH?

GONNA *TRY! DON'T FOR-GET! HOT A WORD!* I *PROMISED* HIM I WOULDN'T TELL A *SOUL.*

WELL, *HAVE FUN*, STELLA. *I* GOTTA *RUN.* THE *GANG'S* OVER AT *MORREY'S.* WE'RE GONNA HAVE A *JAM SESSION. DON'T WORRY!* TOUR *SECRET'S SAFE WITH ME...*

MITZI LEFT AND STELLA STRETCHED OUT ON THE BED SHE SMILED IMPISHLY...

POOR PROFESSOR FINLEY! IF HE ONLY KNEW WHAT HE WAS LETTING HIMSELF IN FOR!

IT WAS GOING TO BE SO SIMPLE. STELLA'D PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY. EVER SINCE THAT FIRST WEEK.. WHEN THEY'D COVERED EGYPTIAN CULTURE AND SHE'D KNOWN SHE'D NEVER BE ABLE TO PASS THAT COURSE, WHAT WITH GREECE AND ROME YET TO COME... SHE'D WORKED ON PROFESSOR FINLEY. AND THIS AFTERNOON, SHE'D FINALLY SUCCEEDED..

OH, ER, MISS SHARP. I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU AFTER MY LECTURE.

OF COURSE, PROFESSOR.

SHE'D BEEN SO CAREFUL ABOUT HER MAKE-UP. SHE'D WORN HER MOST FLATTERING SWEATERS. SHE'D SAT CROSS-LEGGED IN CLASS TILL HER MUSCLES HAD ACHED. AND HE'D FINALLY BITTEN...

YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, PROFESSOR?

LAST NIGHT I READ YOUR PAPER ON THE 'FALL OF ROME,' MISS SHARP. FRANKLY, I'M A LITTLE WORRIED ABOUT HOW MUCH YOU'VE GRASPED FROM MY LECTURES!

I...I'M A LITTLE WORRIED MYSELF, PROFESSOR. I'VE TRIED! HONESTLY, I'VE TRIED! BUT I JUST HAVEN'T UNDERSTOOD...

I THOUGHT I'D MADE THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS QUITE CLEAR, MISS SHARP. I FEEL TERRIBLE HAVE I COVERED TOO MUCH GROUND TOO FAST FOR YOU?

PERHAPS.. IF YOU REVIEWED IT FOR ME, PROFESSOR.. SAY.. SOME EVEHING?

THAT .ER..THAT WOULD BE HIGHLY IRREGULAR, MISS SHARP! THE FACULTY FROWNS ON FRATERNIZATION...

OH! I.. I SEE! WELL.. I...I WOULDN'T WANT TO GET YOU INTO ANY KIND OF TROUBLE..

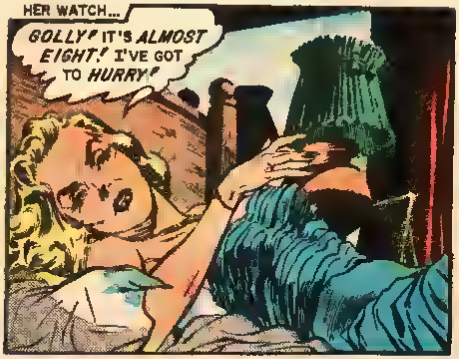
ER. PERHAPS... IF NO ONE KNEW..IF IT WAS.. SAY.. OUR LITTLE SECRET...I MEAN, WELL... I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU, MISS SHARP! YOU'RE A.. VERY NICE .ER . AH. GIRL... COUGH...

HE'D BITTEN, ALL RIGHT HE'D SUCKED IN THE BAIT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER..

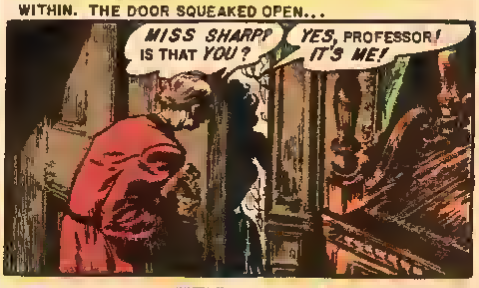
OH, I WOULDN'T TELL A SOUL, PROFESSOR. HOT A SOUL! THIS IS SO SWEET OF YOU! I... I COULD KISS YOU...

AHEM... YES..ER... WELL THEN, SHALL WE SAY... TONIGHT... AT EIGHT... AT MY HOUSE? YOU'LL...ER... MAKE SURE YOU'RE NOT SEEN!

STELLA YAWNED AND STRETCHED. SHE LOOKED AT HER WATCH...



PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WAS ONE OF THOSE OLD FASHIONED MONSTROSITIES THAT HAD ONCE BEEN VERY STYLISH. STELLA LIFTED THE HUGE DOOR KNOCKER. THE HOLLOW BOOM ECHOED DOWN LONG CORRIDORS AND UP STEEP STAIRCASES AND DIED AWAY IN DARK CORNERS WITHIN. THE DOOR SQUEAKED OPEN...



STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR, MOVING LITHELY, TRYING TO LOOK VERY DESIRABLE.

SHE WATCHED HIS BEADY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES. 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' WAS ONE COURSE SHE WASN'T GOING TO HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT...

STELLA HID HER REAL FEELINGS. THE INSIDE OF THE HOUSE WAS WORSE THAN THE OUTSIDE. THERE WERE STATUES WHEREVER ONE LOOKED... MARBLE BUSTS OF ROMAN EMPERORS... FULL LENGTH POSES OF MIGHTY ROMAN WARRIORS...ROMAN POETS, WRITERS, MATHEMATICIANS. COLUMNS LINED THE WALLS, BETWEEN WHICH WERE HUNG PAINTINGS OF ANCIENT ROMAN SCENES.

PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A SMALL DOOR AT THE END OF THE HALL. HE MOTIONED STELLA DOWN THE STEPS...

STELLA DESCENDED THE STEPS SLOWLY, THINKING TO HERSELF.

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS THROW MY *ARMS* AROUND HIM AND *KISS* HIM AND HE'S A *DEAD DUCK!* HE *WON'T* DARE *FLUNK ME. POOR* PROFESSOR FINLEY!

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED *ROMAN CULTURE,* STELLA!

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRS WAS ANOTHER DOOR... A MASSIVE OAK DOOR...

OPEN IT, STELLA!

SURE, PROFESSOR!

STELLA OPENED IT. PROFESSOR FINLEY PUSHED. STELLA SPRAWLED THROUGH...

PROFESSOR!

HEH, HEH, HEH!

THE DOOR SLAMMED SHUT BEHIND STELLA. THE LOCK SNAPPED. PROFESSOR FINLEY'S MANIACAL LAUGH ECHOED THROUGH.

PROFESSOR. MY GOD! WHAT *IS* THIS! LET ME *OUT!*

HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH, HEH!

FOOTSTEPS FADED AWAY UP THE CELLAR STAIRS. STELLA SCREAMED AFTER THEM. SUDDENLY, STELLA'S BLOOD FROZE. SHE HEARD THE LOW-THROATED GROWL...

WHO... WHO'S *THERE?*

HE'S GOT *ANOTHER* ONE!

YOU *POOR KID!*

STELLA PEERED INTO THE GLOOM. SHE SEEMED TO BE IN SOME SORT OF HUGE ROOM. THERE WERE OTHER FIGURES HUDDLED TOGETHER IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR...

WHO... WHO *ARE* YOU?

HE'S *MAD!* HE TRAPPED *US* THE *SAME WAY* HE TRAPPED *YOU!* THIS IS HIS *COLOSSEUM!* SEE? SEE THE *CAGES...?*

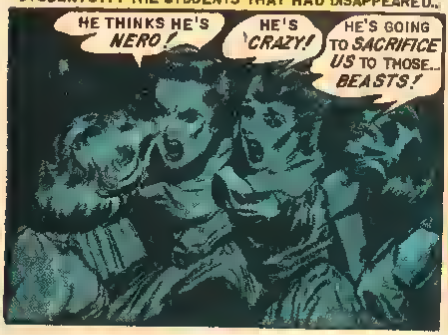
AT THE OTHER END OF THE CAVERNOUS CELLAR CHAMBER, STELLA COULD SEE THE BARS... AND BEHIND THEM, THE BURNING YELLOW EYES AND THE GLEAMING TEETH...

HE'S GOT A *LION* BACK THERE... AND A *TIGER...*

...A *GORILLA!* WE'RE TO BE HIS *CHRISTIAN MARTYRS!*

OH, NO! *NO!*

STELLA'S EYES WERE BECOMING ACCUSTOMED TO THE DARKNESS NOW. SHE COULD SEE THE OTHERS... YOUND GIRLS LIKE HERSELF...SHIVERING IN THE DANK DAMPNESS. SHE RECOGRIZED THEM. THEY WERE STUDENTS... THE STUDENTS THAT HAD DISAPPEARED..



SUDDERLY THE CELLAR REVERSERATED WITH A RECORDED TRUMPET FANFARE. THE LIGHTS WENT ON. STELLA BLINKED. THE SAND FLOOR OF THE CELLAR WAS STAINED RED. IN THEIR CAGES, THE ANIMALS ROARED, DROOLING HUNGRILY..

PROFESSOR FIRLEY ENTERED A DRAPED SOX. HE HAD DISCARDED RIS DRESSING GOWN AND NOW STOOD PROUDLY IN A WHITE ROMAN TOGA, A WREATR OF LAUREL ON HIS HEAD

STELLA AND THE OTHER GIRLS HUDDLED TOGETHER, WHIMPERING, AS THE MAD MAN RAISED HIS WINE GLASS..

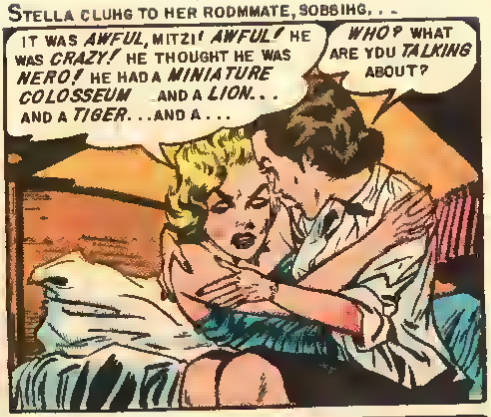
BEHIND HIS SCREENED SOX, PROFESSOR FINLEY PRESSED A BUTTON.. THEN ANOTHER. STELLA SCREAMED. THE BARS OF THE CAGES ROLLED OPER..

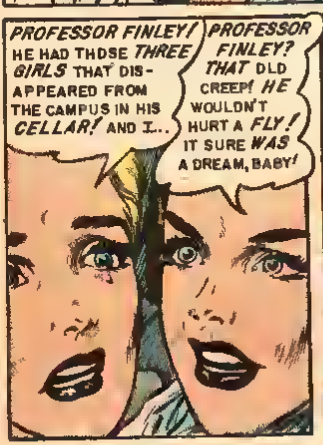
THE LIOR SNARLED. THE TIGER PADDED TOWARD THEM. THE GORILLA POUNDED HIS CHEST, WADDLIRG OUT OF HIS CAGE. THE CELLAR RESOUNDED WITH THE HYSTERICAL SHRIEKINGS OF THE HELPLESS GIRLS..

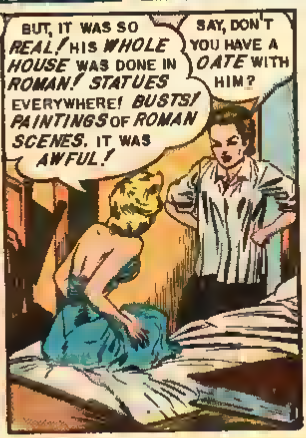
AND AS THE SHRIEKS AND SCREAMS ROSE TO A CRESCERDO, RARMONIZING IN A HORROR SYMPHONY WITH THE ROARS OF THE BLOOD-STARVED BEASTS, THE MANIAC MUNCHED GRAPES ARD STRUMMED RIS LYRE AND WATCRED THE RIPPING... THE TEARING... THE VERY DEATR SCENE HIS MANIACAL COUNTERPART HAD WATCHED NINETEEN CENTURIES AGO..

STELLA SCREAMED. MITZI SHOOK HER AGAIN. STELLA SAT UP, WIDE-EYED...

STELLA CLUNG TO HER ROOMMATE, SOBBING...

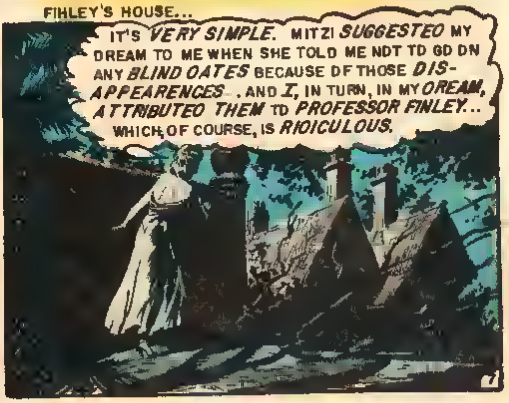






STELLA LEAPED FROM THE BED...

SHE HURRIED DOWN DARK STREETS TO PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE...

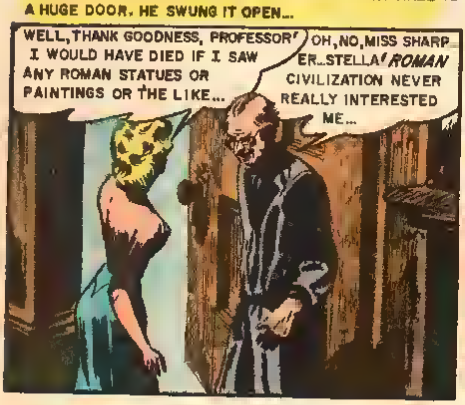


PROFESSOR FINLEY'S HOUSE WASN'T AT ALL AS STELLA HAD DREAMED IT. THERE WAS NO DOORKNOCKER. INSTEAD, SOFT CHIMES SANG FROM WITHIN AS SHE TOUCHED THE BUTTON..

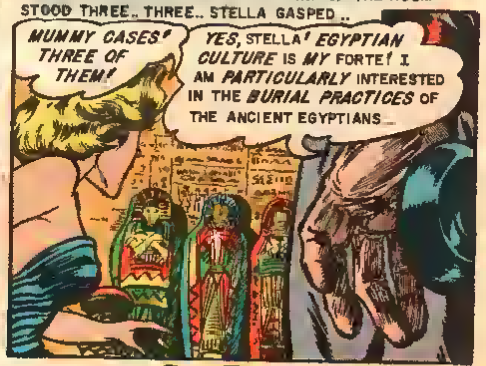
STELLA SWIRLED THROUGH THE DOOR. THIS WAS NO DREAM NOW! THIS WAS IT!

SHE WATCHED HIS BEADY LITTLE EYES SWEEP OVER HER. YES, 'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' WAS *ONE* COURSE...

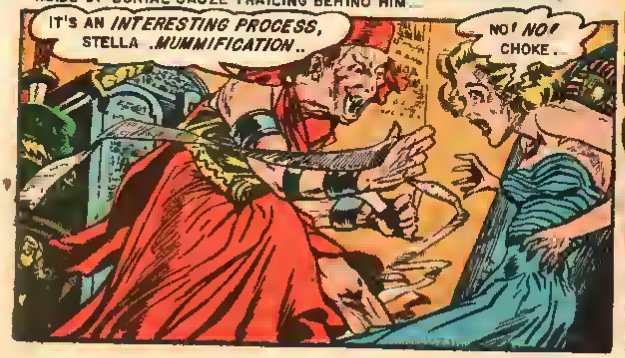
PROFESSOR FINLEY LED STELLA DOWN A LONG HALL TO A HUGE DOOR. HE SWUNG IT OPEN...



THE LOCK SNAPPED BEHIND THEM. STELLA LOOKED AROUND, RELIEVED. THE WALLS BORE WEIRD INSCRIPTIONS AND STRANGE DRAWINGS. AT ONE END OF THE ROOM STOOD THREE.. THREE.. STELLA GASPED..



STELLA BACKED OFF, PROFESSOR FINLEY OPENED A CABINET AND DREW FORTH AN EGYPTIAN PRIEST'S MANTLE. HE DROPPED HIS ROBE, PLACED THE MANTLE ON HIS HEAD, AND CAME TOWARD HER... THE YARDS AND YARDS OF BURIAL GAUZE TRAILING BEHIND HIM...



HEE, HEE! *WELL*, KIDDIES, THAT ABOUT *WRAPS IT UP*... FOR *STELLA*, THAT IS. PROFESSOR FINLEY HAS *FOUR* MUMMY CASES NOW, AND THERE ARE *FOUR* GIRLS MISSING FROM THE CAMPUS. *STRANGE THING* ABOUT *'ANCIENT CIVILIZATION' STUDENTS*. THEY EITHER *FLUNK OUT*, *DROP OUT*, OR.. HEE, HEE... *DIE OUT*. NOW, *THE VAULT-KEEPER* AWAITS WITH *HIS* GORY STORY! I'LL SEE YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER OF MY *GRIM FAIRY TALES*, INCIDENTALLY, IF YOU *HAVEN'T JOINED* THE *E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB*.. *WHY FIGHT IT?* IT'S *BIGGER* THAN *BOTH* OF US! DIG YOU LATER!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

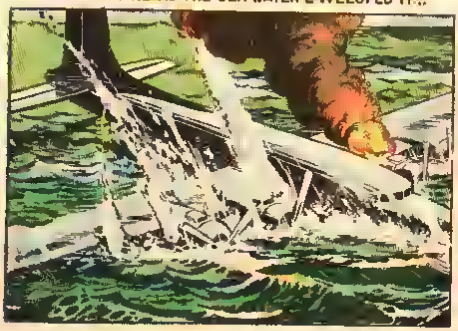
HEH, HEH! NOW IT'S *MY* TURN TO *SHIVER* YOUR *TIMBERS*. YEP, IT'S YOUR *HOST* IN *THE VAULT OF HORROR*, *THE VAULT-KEEPER*, READY TO PRESENT ANOTHER PIECE OF *PUTRIO PROSE* FROM MY *CREEPY COLLECTION* OF *TERROR-TOMES*. *THIS SCREAM-SELECTION* OUGHT TO *CHILL* YOUR *WATERY BLOOD!* I *CALL* IT..

NO SILVER ATOLL!

WHEN WE BOARDED THE TRANS-PACIFIC AIRLINER IN SAN FRANCISCO, CLARK AND I WERE PERFECT STRANGERS. HE CHOSE THE SEAT BESIDE ME AND WE BEGAN TO TALK. BY HAWAII, WE WERE FRIENDS. BY WAKE ISLAND, WE WERE MORE THAN FRIENDS. BY GUAM, I WAS IN LOVE AND KNEW IT. AND WHEN THE ENGINE CAUGHT FIRE SOMEWHERE SOUTH-EAST OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE ONLY TERROR..THE ONLY FEAR I HAD... WAS NOW THAT I'D FOUND CLARK, I WAS GOING TO LOSE HIM...

I REMEMBER THE STEWARDESS STUMBLING UP AND DOWN THE AISLE, COMFORTING US, REASSURING US, AND THE SCREAMING WHINE OF THE WIND OUTSIDE MIXING WITH THE SHRIEKS OF THE PASSENGERS INSIDE AS OUR PLANE DOVE SEAWARD. AND I REMEMBER HOW I TOOK CLARK'S HAND AND HELD IT TO MY TREMBLING LIPS...

THE PACIFIC CAME UP TO MEET US, BLUE AND VAST AND ROLLING, AND THE MOMENTS BEFORE WE HIT WERE ETERNITIES. THEN, THE SUDDEN SHOCK! THE SPRAY EXPLODING UPWARD AROUND US! THE HISSING OF THE FLAMING ENGINE AS THE SEA WATER ENVELOPED IT...

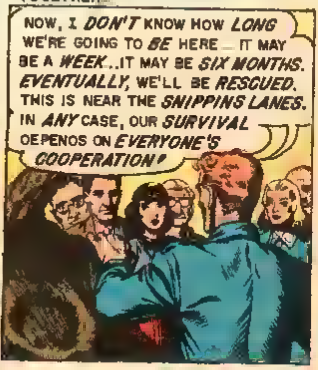


THEN, THE UTTER SCREAMING CONFUSION, AS WE REALIZED WE WERE SINKING. SOMEONE OPENED THE ESCAPE HATCH AND WE POURED OUT ONTO THE WING. MISS KIRBY, THE STEWARDESS, REMEMBERED TO SALVAGE THE MEDICAL KIT, AND THE PILOT, CAPTAIN MILLER, MANAGED TO INFLATE TWO LIFE RAFTS...

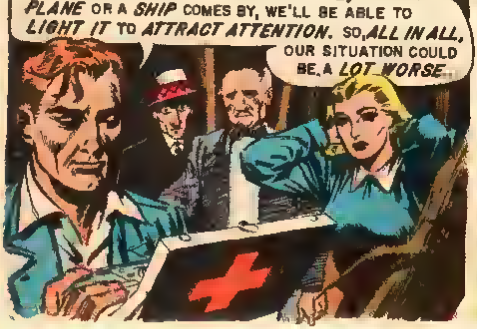
THE PLANE WENT DOWN NOSE FIRST IN A MATTER OF MINUTES. I SHUDDERED AS I WATCHED THE TAIL SECTION SINK SLOWLY BENEATH THE CHOPPY PACIFIC...

HOURS LATER, WE PULLED OUR RAFTS UP ON A SPUME-LINED SLIMY SHORE. FOUL-SMELLING DRIFTWOOD AND REEKING SEAWEED COVERED THE NARROW STEAMING BEACH...

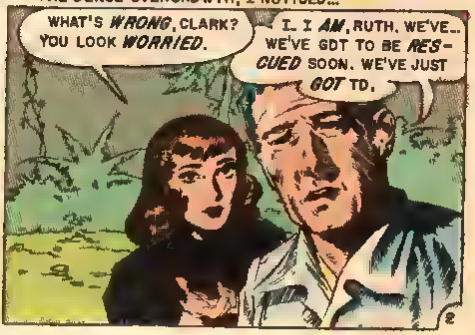
AFTER WE'D CLEARED A CAMPSITE, CAPTAIN MILLER CALLED US ALL TOGETHER...



THERE IS PLENTY OF FRUIT GROWING ON THE ISLAND, AND PLENTY OF FISH IN THE LAGOON SO WE WON'T STARVE. WE'VE GOT ONE GUN, ONE BOX OF SHELLS, AND A MEDICAL KIT. WITH ALL THE DRIFTWOOD AROUND, WE CAN BUILD A SIGNAL PYRE, AND IF A PLANE OR A SHIP COMES BY, WE'LL BE ABLE TO LIGHT IT TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. SO, ALL IN ALL, OUR SITUATION COULD BE A LOT WORSE...



SO THERE WE WERE, ELEVEN HUMAN BEINGS MAROONED ON AN UNINHABITED TROPICAL ISLAND. THAT FIRST NIGHT, AS CLARK AND I SAT BESIDE EACH OTHER AND LISTENED TO THE SQUEALING TROPICAL BIRDS OFF IN THE DENSE OVERGROWTH, I NOTICED...



A WEEK WENT BY, NO PLANE OR SHIP CAME NEAR OUR ISLAND, AND STRANGE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN. ONE OF OUR PARTY WAS A THIEF
THAT'S RIGHT, MY RING WAS STOLEN LAST NIGHT. I DEMAND ITS RETURN.
I DON'T KNOW WHO THE GUILTY PARTY IS, MR KUBLESKI, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST TO FIND OUT.
EVERY NIGHT, SOMETHING ELSE WAS STOLEN FROM ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF OUR GROUP...
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, CAPTAIN! MY BELT-BUCKLE WAS OF LITTLE VALUE. WHO WOULD WANT TO STEAL A BELT-BUCKLE?
ONE OF US IS A CLEPTOMANIC. I HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO POST A WATCH. TWO OF US AT A TIME WILL STAND GUARD WHILE THE OTHERS SLEEP. THIS PETTY THIEVERY MUST BE STOPPED...
CAPTAIN MILLER FUMBLED THROUGH HIS POCKETS...
I'LL FLIP A COIN TO SEE WHO...WHO...THAT'S FUNNY! I WAS SURE I HAD SOME CHANGE. ANYBODY GOT A QUARTER?
I HAVE, CAPTAIN! I...I... THAT'S STRANGE.
ONE BY ONE, WE ALL SEARCHED OUR POCKETS AND PURSES. IT WAS INCREDIBLE...
I HAD PLENTY OF CHANGE. I REMEMBER! NOW, I'VE ONLY A PENNY AND TWO NICKELS.
ALL OF MY DIMES AND QUARTERS ARE GONE... STOLEN!
THE THIEF, WHOEVER HE OR SHE WAS, HAD RIFLED THROUGH EVERYONE'S CLOTHES...PROBABLY WHILE WE SLEPT. BUT THE CURIOUS THING WAS...
HE'S ONLY TAKEN DIMES AND QUARTERS AND HALF-DOLLARS!
ALL MY BILLS ARE HERE. A SILVER DOLLAR I HAD IS GONE. MY PENNIES AND NICKELS ARE STILL HERE!
MISS KIRBY, THE STEWARDESS GASPED...
MR. DAWSON, WHAT WAS YOUR BELT BUCKLE MADE OF?
SILVER!
AND MY RING! MY RING WAS SILVER, TOO!
IT... IT SEEMS OUR THIEF IS ONLY INTERESTED IN STEALING SILVER! BUT WHY?
WE FOUND OUT WHY! ONE NIGHT AT THE END OF THE SECOND WEEK, I WAS AWAKENED TO THE BLOOD-CURDLING SOUND OF SOMEONE SHRIEKING IN PAIN...
YAAAAHHHHH!
GOOD LORD! WHAT WAS THAT?

THE SCREAM HAD AWAKENED THE WHOLE CAMP. IT HAD COME FROM UP THE BEACH. WE ALL SCRAMBLED TOWARD THE SPOT. THE MOON CAST AN EERIE GREENISH GLOW ON EVERYTHING. HE WAS LYING FACE DOWNWARD ON THE BLOOD-STAINED SAND...

MR. HOWARD! CHOKE... HE'S BEEN TORN TO SHREDS... AS IF HE'D BEEN ATTACKED BY A WILD BEAST...

WE STARED AT EACH OTHER... ASHEN FACES IN THE PALE MOONLIGHT. CAPTAIN MILLER'S VOICE WAS COLD, EXPRESSIONLESS...

BUT THERE ARE NO WILD BEASTS ON THIS ISLAND! ONLY US... THEN ONE OF US IS THE WILD BEAST! MR. KUBLESKI! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

IN THE PORTION OF EUROPE WHERE I COME FROM THERE IS A BELIEF THAT CERTAIN HUMAN BEINGS WHEN THE MOON IS FULL, CRAVE THE FLESH OF OTHER HUMANS. WE CALL THEM WEREWOLVES!

YOU, YOU MEAN THAT ONE OF US IS A WEREWOLF, MR. KUBLESKI?

...AND IT IS ALSO BELIEVED THAT THE ONLY WAY TO KILL A WEREWOLF IS TO SHOOT IT WITH A SILVER BULLET!

A SILVER.. GOOD LORD! THE MISSING COINS...THE RING... THE BELT-BUCKLE... ALL SILVER!

I SHIVERED IN THE TROPICAL NIGHT. CLARK CAME UP BEHIND ME AND SLIPPED HIS ARM AROUND MY SHOULDER...

YOU MEAN THAT UNLESS WE CAN MANUFACTURE A SILVER BULLET, WE CANNOT KILL THIS...THIS THING, MR. KUBLESKI?

THAT IS CORRECT, CLARK. NO LEAD BULLET WILL KILL A WEREWOLF! ONLY... SILVER

I LOOKED AT THE FACES AROUND ME AS MR. KUBLESKI SPOKE. CAPTAIN MILLER... MR. DAWSON... MISS KIRBY... MR. ANSEN... MRS. AMES... MR. AMES... WHO WAS IT? WHO?

THE WEREWOLF KNEW HE...OR SHE... WAS IN TROUBLE WHEN WE CRASHED. HE KNEW THAT THE FULL MOON WOULD RISE WITHIN TWO WEEKS. HE KNEW HE WOULD HAVE TO STRIKE. SO, HE STOLE EVERYTHING MADE OF SILVER THAT WE HAD...

AND NOW, EVEN IF HIS IDENTITY IS LEARNED, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DESTROY HIM!

IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, I SCARCELY LEFT CLARK'S SIDE. I WAS FRIGHTENED AND HE WAS THE ONLY ONE I COULD TURN TO. . .
CLARK! NEXT WEEK IS THE FULL MOON AGAIN! WHAT WILL WE DO? WHAT IF IT STRIKES AGAIN!
I'LL PROTECT YOU, HONEY! DON'T WORRY!
AND THEN, IT HAPPENED AGAIN. FOUR WEEKS AFTER THE FIRST MURDER, ON THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON, A HORRIBLE SHRIEK ECHOED ACROSS OUR TROPIC ISLAND...
EEEEEEEEGGHH!
AND WHEN WE GOT TO MISS KIRBY'S LEAN-TO, WE FOUND HER PALE WHITE BODY TORN AND SHREDDED AND STREAKED RED WITH BLOOD.
CHOKE...
THE WEREWOLF HAS STRUCK AGAIN!
CAPTAIN MILLER SHOUTED...
ALL RIGHT! WE'LL FIND OUT WHO IT IS! WHO'S MISSING? QUICKLY! LOOK AROUND! WHO ISN'T HERE?
DON'T BOTHER LOOKING, CAPTAIN! IT IS TOO LATE! ONCE THE WEREWOLF'S HUNGER FOR HUMAN FLESH IS SATED, HE RETURNS ONCE MORE TO HIS NORMAL SELF.
MR. KUBLESKI LOOKED AROUND...
HE IS NO DOUBT RIGHT HERE AMONG US AT THE PRESENT MOMENT!
ARE THERE ANY TESTS, MR. KUBLESKI... ANY WAYS OF TELLING WHO IS A WEREWOLF?
DURING THE PERIOD PRECEEDING THE RISE OF THE FULL MOON, THERE ARE VERY FEW, CLARK! WEREWOLVES ARE MORTALLY AFRAID OF GARLIC. IN THE OLD COUNTRY, MANY PEASANTS STILL HANG GARLIC ON THEIR DOORS AT FULL MOON TIME. AS THE FULL MOON RISES, THE WEREWOLVES EYES TURN RED. A PENTAGRAM IS SEEN ON THE PALM OF HIS INTENDED VICTIM. HIS EYEBROWS MERGE. . . HIS FACE GROWS HAIRY... HIS TEETH LENGTHEN. . .
AND THEN, AT EXACTLY THE MOMENT OF THE FULL MOON, THE TRANSFORMATION IS COMPLETE. HE IS, IN FACT, A VERITABLE HUMAN WOLF.
LORD! WHERE CAN WE GET ENOUGH SILVER TO FASHION A SILVER BULLET? WE'VE GOT TO DESTROY THIS GOD-AWFUL CREATURE.

WITH MISS KIRBY'S DEATH, I BECAME GUARDIAN OF THE MEDICAL KIT. ALTHOUGH MY TRAINING CONSISTED ONLY OF A SHORT NURSE'S AIDE COURSE DURING THE WAR, I NEVERTHELESS MANAGED TO PATCH UP THE VARIOUS CUTS AND BRUISES SUFFERED BY THE MEMBERS OF OUR PARTY...
DO YOU THINK A SHIP WILL EVER COME, CLARK?
I CERTAINLY HOPE SO, RUTH! I'M SO SICK OF FISH AND FRUIT!
ONE DAY I WAS WALKING DOWN ALONG THE BEACH WHEN I NOTICED A CRATE THAT HAD WASHED ASHORE. I READ THE FADED STENCIL MARKINGS...
'U.S. ARMY... QUARTERMASTER CORPS... FIELD RATIONS...'
I WAVED TO CLARK WHO WAS UP AT THE CAMP...
CLARK! COME HERE! QUICK!
SURE THING, RUTH!
CLARK CAME ON THE RUN. I POINTED TO THE ROTTED CRATE... LAUGHING...
YOU WANTED SOMETHING ELSE BESIDE FISH AND FRUIT, DARLING! WELL, HERE YOU ARE..
CHOKE..
CLARK RECOILED IN HORROR. HE WALKED AWAY... MUTTERING...
..VERY FUNNY!
CLARK, HONEY! I WAS ONLY JOKING! PLEASE DON'T BE ANGRY...
HE WALKED ON UP TO CAMP, NEVER ONCE LOOKING BACK. I KICKED AT THE CRATE FURIOUSLY...
OH, BLAST YOU! WHY DID YOU PICK THIS BEACH TO WASH UP... ON... GASP...
BANG!
THE ROTTED CRATE FELL APART. THE CANS ROLLED OUT OVER THE SAND. I PICKED ONE UP. THE STAMPED LETTERS DENOTING ITS CONTENTS WAS STILL LEGIBLE...
GOOD LORD! CANNED SALAMI! SALAMI HAS...CHOKE... GARLIC IN IT!
6

I DIDN'T WANT TO *BELIEVE* IT. I PRAYED I WAS *WRONG*. *CLARK... THE WEREWOLF!* HOW COULD IT *BE*? I *LOVED* CLARK. I WANTED TO *MARRY* HIM WHEN ALL THIS WAS OVER. I HAD TO BE *SURE*. I WENT BACK TO MY LEAN-TO...

THERE'S A *CALENDAR* SOMEWHERE! I *KNOW* IT! I *SAW* IT! I ..I.. I *REMEMBER!* *THE MEDICAL KIT!*

I OPENED THE MEDICAL KIT. I STUDIED THE CALENDAR. TONIGHT... TONIGHT WAS TO BE THE FULL MOON. I STARTED TO CLOSE THE MEDICAL KIT, WHEN SOMETHING CAUGHT MY EYE...

OF COURSE! HOW *STUPID* OF ME NOT TO HAVE *THOUGHT* OF THIS BEFORE!

THAT NIGHT I WENT TO CLANK'S LEAN-TO. HE LOOKED UP AT ME SADLY...

WHY DID YOU HAVE TO *FIND OUT*? WE COULD HAVE BEEN SO *HAPPY* TOGETHER! *HOW...*

I KNOW, CLARK! *LOOK!* MY *PALM!* THE *PENTAGRAM!* YOU'RE GOING TO *KILL* ME!

THE MOONLIGHT STREAMED IN UPON HIS FACE AS HE CHANGED... AS HIS EYEBROWS MERGED...

EXACTLY...

...AS HIS EYES TUNNELED AND HIS TEETH LENGTHENED AND THE HAIR GREW OUT OF HIS FACE...

I HAVE TO!

...AND HE SNARLED AND SPRANG AT ME, SLOBBERING.

...AND I PLUNGED THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLE INTO HIS CHEST...

AGH!

CAPTAIN MILLER CAME AND LOOKED AT CLANK'S DEAD BODY LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT AND THEN HE STARED AT ME QUESTIONINGLY AS I HANDED HIM THE EMPTY HYPODERMIC I'D FILLED WITH *SILVER NITRATE* FROM THE *BOTTLE* I'D FOUND IN THE *MEDICAL KIT*...

IT... IT *WORKED*... SOS... LIKE A *SILVER BULLET!* YOU CAN TELL... SOS... MR. KUSLESKI

GOOD LORD!

HEH, HEH! THAT'S *RUTHY'S YARN*, KIDDIES, EXACTLY AS SHE TOLD IT TO *ME*. HOW COME SHE *MET* ME, YOU ASK? SO *WHO* DO YOU THINK *RESCUED* HER AND THE OTHER CRUMBS? *MATCH!* *ME!* YOU SEE, I WAS TAKING A LITTLE *CRUISE* THIS SUMMER ON MY *GHOST SHIP* AND... WELL, THAT'S *ANOTHER* STORY! I'LL SAVE IT TILL SOME *OTHER* TIME. *NOW* IT'S TIME TO *CLOSE UP THE VAULT OF HORROR* FOR *THIS* ISSUE OF *O.W.'S MAG*, AND TURN YOU *BACK* TO HER. SO, 'BYE, NOW. AND... AS THE *UNDERTAKER* SAID WHEN HE PAINTED HIS COFFIN-CANT *RED*, "*THIS* IS A *HEARSE* OF A *DIFFERENT COLOR!*"

BREEZE!

With the blueprints carefully folded in his breast pocket, Krilov stepped out of the Design Room. He glanced up and down the broad corridor, no one had noticed him. Another few minutes, Krilov thought, and he'd have successfully stolen the plans for one of America's most jealously guarded military secrets!

Through a door marked Test Section, Krilov passed . . . his hand brushing his coat and the bulge in his pocket. The plans would be on their way overseas in less than 8 hours. Krilov gloated . . . before another sunset his nation's aircraft experts would be examining the blueprints of the top-secret B-111 jet bomber! Stealing plans from a Yankee airplane factory was child's play. Krilov reflected . . . to use the Americans' own phrase, it was a BREEZE!

A uniformed guard appeared to be watching him. Krilov reached with dismay. The man was scrutinizing over from the far end of the corridor. Krilov looked about nervously . . . he had been detected somehow! Opposite him were a large pair of doors with a sign reading, RESTRICTED . . . KEEP OUT! If the guard came closer, Krilov thought, he'd make a dash for it. Those doors would provide him with a few minutes' breathing time . . . he'd manage to think of a way out of this dilemma! A way to pass on the plans to a colleague, even if they got *him!*

"Hey, mister!" the guard was bellowing at him now. Krilov darted toward the huge doors, tugged [illegible] squeezed [illegible] inside. Perspiration standing out like raindrops on his furrowed brow, Krilov slammed the doors shut behind him and heard the lock click into place. He'd have to think fast . . .

The room was of enormous proportions, Krilov noted as he slid his hand into the secret pouch and pulled out the blueprints. It was some kind of gargantuan hall . . . thousands of steel cables ran from floor to ceiling far overhead. He'd hide the plans in one of the struts, then pass the word into his colleagues after he was released. It would be a breeze . . .

A roaring sound alarmed Krilov. He stopped in his tracks and turned toward the source of noise. A gigantic horn completely dominated the far wall . . . it was stirring up a frightful wind!

Krilov felt the full shattering blast the next second. It lifted him off the floor, tore his coat from his body in a thousand tatters and hurled him headlong toward one of the sloping side walls. He crashed with stunning force against the struts, was aware that the flesh of his face and hands had been sliced off in bloody shreds. He tried groggily to stand, but the turmoil was too much. once again he was wrenched from the floor and catapulted against the murderous struts. A stabbing pain flashed between his eyes . . . one of his arms was being savagely torn from its socket by the awful wind . . .

* * * * *

"I-I tried to stop him," the bewildered guard said in the chief of the Security Section. "He seemed to be lost. But before I could get to him he went in there . . ." The guard pointed to the double-doors marked: RESTRICTED . . . KEEP OUT! "Went into the *High-Velocity Wind Tunnel!*"

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION, REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933 AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code Section 233) of HAUNT OF FEAR published Bi-monthly at New York, N. Y. for October 1, 1953.

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Fables Pub. Co. Inc., 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y., Editor, Albert B. Feldstein, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y., Managing Editor, William M. Gaines, 225 Lafayette St. New York 12, N. Y.; Business manager, Frank D. Lee, 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y.

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5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown above was: (This information is required from daily, weekly, semiweekly, and triweekly newspapers only.)

(Signed) FRANK D. LEE, Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 23rd day of September, 1953.

[SEAL] Ettore De Stefano, Notary Public. (My commission expires March 30, 1954.)

YEP, KIDDIES! E.C.'s NEW HUMOR MAG, **PANIC** IS ON SALE. SO RUSH DOWN TO YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND AND GET YOUR COPY. HOWEVER IF YOU **DON'T** WANT TO **MISS** ANY FOOTBALL GAMES... IF YOU WANT TO **READ PANIC** AND **SIT IN THE BOWL** AT THE **SAME TIME... SUBSCRIBE!** FILL OUT THE COUPON AND MAIL TO...

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PLEASE SEND ME THE NEXT 8 ISSUES OF **PANIC** FOR WHICH I ENCLOSE ONE DOLLAR ($1.00)

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY ZONE STATE

THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Hee, hee! I won! It's "that time of the year again" . . so me and my idiot editors had a big battle, They wanted to cut my column to make room for the annual "who-owns-what" hogwash But we finally decided to stick it on the text page. I threatened to cut off their supply of chlorophyll . . . the stinkers. They turned green! So now, without further ado, let's dig into the mail-bag and compile the latest additions to the E C. Horror Hit Parade, as submitted by the following fetched-title-twisters R. and B. Richie of Chicago, Ill., Carole Jean Peck of Three Rivers, Mass; Leonard E. Eckert of Marysville, Calif., Hilliare Bopray of Green Bay, Wis., Jerry Granozio of Corning, N. Y., Jerry Hanna of New Castle, Pa.; Michael Fratantuno and Tom De-Deo of Newark, N. J.; Sally Hodges and friends of Fort Clayton, Canal Zone, and J. J. Spina of N. Y. C.:

DO NOT CREMATE ME, OH MY DARLING
I'VE GOT YOUR BLOOD TO KEEP ME WARM
I'LL BE DOWN TO EAT YOU IN A TAXI, YUMMY!
I SAW MOMMY EATING SANTA'S CLAWS
IT'S THE TALK OF THE TOMB
DON'T DRAIN ME
MY OLD KENTUCKY CRONE
HACK IN YOUR OWN BACK YARD
DON'T SPIT UNDER THE APPLE TREE
JUST ANOTHER CROAKER
THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR YOUR SON'S EYES
I DON'T CARE IF THE SUN DON'T SHINE
(I EAT MY LOVERS IN THE EVENIN' TIME)
CUT HER UP A LITTLE CLOSER
THRUST IN ME
I'M PUKING OVER THE FOUR STIFFS OF DOVER
DROWNED IN THE OLD BILGE STREAM
I WILL BREAK YOUR BACK AGAIN, KATHLEEN
SOMEBODY STOLE MY GUTS
A-CRUNCHING WE WILL GO
I'M SLITTING THE TOP OF A GIRL

Joe Malone of Brooklyn and Dan Voorhees of Los Angeles suggest the following vampire vocalists to warble the above disgusting ditties:

EDDIE SQUISHER
DINAH GORE
LES PALL-BEARER
MEL TORE-ME
ETHEL MURDER-MAN
ROSEMARY SLEW ME
BOIL EYES

Putrid Poetry Dept.: Sickly Sandy of Willow Grove, Pa. dashes off this one to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean":

PAIL, PLEASE

My stomach is in a commotion,
My head's hanging over the rail . . .
I don't want to mess up the ocean
So somebody bring me a pail!

Bobby McMahon of Decatur, Ill. pens this prize:

When a vampire goes out at night
He sure don't go out to fly a kite!
He goes out searching, and then he drains
And leaves his victim with empty veins!

or

Down in the valley, the valley so red
Hang your neck over and I'll cut off your head

Stan Grossman of Detroit, Mich. sends us this parody.

Mary had a little lamb
It went with her to school
One day the lamb came home alone
It really was a ghoul!

John Chapin of Houston, Texas dreams up this delicious delight:

Blood and guts all over the street
And me without a spoon to eat

And now for some missives from the not-so-artistic.

Dear Old Crone,
I and my friend have a boast to make. By the time this is printed, I will have 160 E.C.'s, and my friend will have 170. I think we have two of the largest collections of E.C. mags in the United States. If there are any people who have more, I would like to hear from them.
Norman Benedict
Matt Flynn
1413 Rosemary
Columbia, Mo

This sounds like a trap.

Dear Old Witch,
It always seemed kind of strange that everytime anything happens in your books, somebody says, "Good Lord!" I thought it was kind of silly, but it seems that recently everyone's been saying it.
Paul Cummins
Salina, Kansas

Power of the press, Paul.

Dear Old Ugly,
Every month, I look forward to the story drawn by Ghastly Graham Ingels. I think he's swell because half his characters look like my relatives.
Mary Little
N Y C

You poor fershlugginer kid.

And now for the advertising. (If ya ain't got any money, don't bother reading the rest of this fershlugginer column!) In case you didn't catch E.C.'s two 3-D magazines while they were languishing on the newsstands, the stockroom is now bulging with millions of copies for you unfortunate people who missed them! And have my idiot editors got an offer for YOU! You can now obtain THREE DIMENSIONAL EC CLASSICS (original newsstand price 25c) or THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR (ditto) for the absurd price of 15c each . . . or the special combined price of 2 for 30c. This is 3-D like you never saw 3-D before — or since! Subscriptions (in 2-D) for the HAUNT OF FEAR will lower your financial worth by one buck for eight flat issues. The address for 3-D orders, subscription orders, and the other stuff like what you been sending me is:

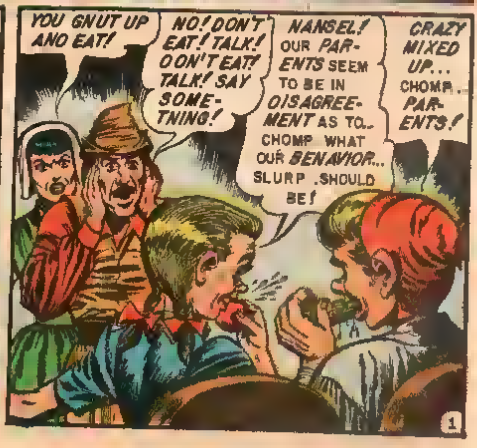
The Old Witch
Room 706, Dept. 23
225 Lafayette Street
N. Y. 12, N. Y.

THE OLD WITCH'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

HERE'S THE LATEST IN MY FAIRY TALE DEBUNKING CAMPAIGN, KIDDIES. THIS IS THE *REAL SCOOP*... THE *TRUE* FACTS BEHIND THE NAUSEATING NONSENSE THAT YOU'VE READ AS...

HANSEL and GRETEL!

Y'SEE, ACTUALLY, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE AND TWO KIDS *WEREN'T* SO *BAD OFF*. THEY *WEREN'T* SO *POOR* THAT THEY *COULDN'T BUY FOOD* LIKE IN THE VERSIONS *YOU'VE* READ. IN FACT, THE OLD MAN WAS DOING *ALL RIGHT*, WHAT WITH THE *HOUSING BOOM* AND THE *G.I.S* BACK FROM THE *CRUSADES*. THE *REAL* TROUBLE WAS...



GET THE PICTURE, KIDDIES? ACTUALLY THESE TWO BRATS WERE EATING THEIR FOLKS OUT OF HOUSE AND HOME. SO ONE NIGHT..
WE GOTTA GET RID OF 'EM! WE JUST GOTTA! THAT'S ALL! SUPPER TONIGHT WAS THE LAST STRAW.. THE LAST STRAW!
THE LAST STRAW? SOB! I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD STEAK IN YEARS. ALL THE TIME, THEY EAT STEAK— I EAT STRAW! NOW..NO MORE STRAW, EVEN!
NOW, DON'T GET EXCITED... I GOT A SUGGESTION! WHAT SAY I TAKE 'EM OUT INTO THE WOODS AND DITCH 'EM? WE'D BE RID OF THEM! WE'D EAT AGAIN... REAL FOOD...MEAT...VEGETABLES... YOGURT!
HUSBAND, DEAR! HOW COULD YOU? YOU SHOCK ME! I... I... WE'LL DO IT! MAYBE A TREE'LL FALL ON THEM... OR A WILD BEAST...
IN THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FLIMSY WALL OF THEIR PRE-FAB WOODCUTTER'S CASIN, HANSEL AND GRETEL LISTENED...
CHOMP..CHOMP.. D'YA HEAR THAT? THEY'RE GONNA DITCH US, HANS.
DON'T GET DISPEPSIA, SIS. I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING
PASS ME THE WORSTERSHI.. THE WORCESTSHI... THE WORSHI... THE KETCHUP!
LATER, WHEN EVERYONE WAS ASLEEP, HANSEL TIP-TOED OUTSIDE AND GATHERED UP SOME WHITE PEBBLES...
I'M NO FOOL. I PASSED MY JUNIOR FORESTER'S MERIT BADGE TEST! I'M CLEVER! I'M... I'M... I'M HUNGRY!
AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, WHEN THE WOODCUTTER LED THE CHILDREN INTO THE FOREST, HANSEL WAS READY...
COME, KIDDIES! FOLLOW ME! WE WILL GO DEEP INTO THE WOODS. WE WILL HAVE A PICNIC. WE WILL...
NO RACE, SISTER! AS WE PROCEED INTO THE IMPENETRA... THE IMPENET...THE... THE THICK FOREST, I KEEP DROPPING PEBBLES!
FINALLY, DEEP IN THE FOREST, THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...
WELL! THIS IS IT! THE FINISH! THE PAY-OFF! YOU TWO ARE THROUGH...OONE...WASHED UP! IT'S THE END OF THE LINE..
FATHER'S SEEN READING MICKEY SPILLANE!
CHOMP.. CHOMP.. ME TOO! VA-VA-VOOM!
AND THEN, WITHOUT A WORD, THE WOODCUTTER DASHED OFF, LEAVING HIS TWO CHILDREN STRANDED...
IS HE GONE... CHOMP?
HE'S.. CHOMP ..REAL GONE!
2

LATER THAT NIGHT, WHEN THE MOON CAME UP AND THE SHINY PEBBLES THAT HANSEL HAD DROPPED GLITTERED LIKE NEWLY MINTED SUBWAY TOKENS, THE CHILDREN RETRACED THEIR STEPS...
WE'RE ALMOST HOME, HANSEL!
YES, I CAN HEAR THE WILD CHEERING AND HYSTERICAL LAUGHING!
THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE HAD JUST SAT DOWN TO THEIR FIRST SQUARE MEAL IN YEARS WHEN THE DOOR TO THEIR TINY COTTAGE SWUNG OPEN...
YUM! YUM! STEAK!
AND MASHED POTATOES! AND...
SUR-PRISE!
OH, NO!
CHOKE!
MMMM! FOOD! WE'RE STARVED!
PASS THE WORCESTERSH!... THE WORSTERSHI... THE WORSHT!... THE KETCHUP!
THAT NIGHT, THE WOODCUTTER AND HIS WIFE PLOTTED...
WE'VE GOT TO TRY IT AGAIN, WIFEY! AND THIS TIME, WE'VE GOT TO DO THE JOB RIGHT!
OKAY! OKAY! NOW PASS ME THAT BONE. IT'S MY TURN TO GNAW ON IT!
AND SO, THE NEXT MORNING, THE WOODCUTTER AGAIN LED HIS DARLINGS INTO THE IMPENETRA...THE IMPENET... THE WOODS...
TODAY, WE WILL OBSERVE THE HABITS AND HABITATS OF THE YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER... A BIRD OF THE WOODPECKER FAMILY NOTED FOR ITS DISTINCT PLUMMAGE...
CUT THE CORN, POM GIVE US THE MICKEY SPILLANE ROUTINE AND LET'S GET IT OVER WITH!
YEAH! WE'RE HUNGRY!
THE WOODCUTTER TURNED...
THE STRING'S RUN OUT! YOUR TIME IS UP! ER... SAY YOUR PRAYERS! ER... AH...
SO, ALREADY!
YEAH! WE'RE HUNGRY!
THE WOODCUTTER DASHED OFF LEAVING THE TWO CHILDREN DEEP IN THE FOREST...(HEH, HEH... THOUGHT I'D SAY IMPENETRA...IMPENETR... THICK, EH?)...
COME, HANSEL. SHARE MY CRUST OF BREAD SINCE YOU HAVE TORN UP YOURS INTO TINY CRUMBS TO LEAVE A TRAIL FOR US TO FOLLOW BACK HOME!
WHO DID? THINK I'M A FOOL? I PASSED MY BIRD STUDY MERIT BADGE TEST! WHY LET THE BIRDS EAT IT? CHOMP... CHOMP...
3

AND SO, HANSEL AND GRETEL WERE REALLY LOST THIS TIME. BUT DO YOU THINK THEY CARED? DO YOU THINK THEY WORRIED? YOU'RE DARN RIGHT THEY DID! AFTER ALL, IN A FEW HOURS, THEY GOT... YOU GUESSED IT...
..HUNGRY! I'M STARVED, HANSEL!
ME TOO! I COULD EAT A HORSE! I... I LOOK!
IT STOOD BEFORE THEM IN THE CLEARING. THE TIRY COTTAGE! GRETEL RAN TOWARD IT, SLOBBERING...
GRETEL! COME BACK! DON'T! STOP! I SAID 'HORSE'... NOT 'MOUSE'!
CHOMP... CHOMP... P-TOODEE!
Y'SEE, KIDDIES? Y'SEE HOW THE TRUTH CAN BE DISTORTED? THIS WASN'T ANY CANDY HOUSE LIKE IN THE VERSIONS YOU'VE READ. IT WAS A GOOD SUBSTANTIAL BRICK, FIELDSTORE, AND CLAPBOARD COTTAGE...(WITH FOUR ROOMS AND ONE AND ONE-HALF BATHS. SIXTY BY A HUNDRED... $2,000 DOWN.. BALANCE AT FIVE %, TWENTY YEARS. DEALS FOR G.I.'S!) ONLY 'CAUSE HANSEL SAID HE COULD EAT A HORSE... GRETEL MISUNDERSTOOD HIM.
SEE? HUH? SEE? HUH..?
...SO NATURALLY THE LITTLE OLD PENSIONED WIDOW WHO LIVED THERE ASKED...
NIBBLING, NIBBLING.. LIKE A MOUSE, WHO'S THAT NIBBLING AT MY HOUSE?
AW, SHUT UP, Y'OLD BAT!
I'M NOT KIDDING! SHE WAS NO WITCH! LISTEN! I OUGHT TO KNOW A WITCH WHEN I SEE ONE. THIS OLD LADY WAS A SWEET LITTLE OLD THING...
MY LAR'! CHILDREN! ARE YOU HUNGRY? COME INSIDE.
GANG-WAY!
ONE SIDE, Y'OLD BAG!
THIS LITTLE OLD LADY, KIND-HEARTED SOUL THAT SHE WAS, LISTENED TO HANSEL AND GRETEL'S STORY...
AND SINCE MAMA AND PAPA... CHOMP.. COULDN'T AFFORD TO BUY US FOOD.. THEY LEFT US IN THE WOODS TO DIE... CHOMP.. BECAUSE THEY COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE US., SLURP... SUFFER!
CHOMP.. SAD, AIN'T IT?
SOB... SOB! OH... YES!
...ARD FELL FOR IT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...
YOU TWO LITTLE DARLINGS CAN STAY HERE! I'LL FEED YOU! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU! I'LL BUY YOU PRETTY CLOTHES... TOYS.. CANDY.. SODAS.. MALTEDS..
HANSEL! THIS OLD BAT MUST BE LOADED!
JUST SHUT UP AND PLAY ALONG!

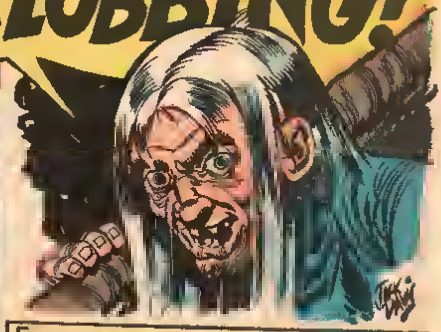
THIS LITTLE OLD LADY BEGGED THEM BRATS TO STAY WITH HER..
PLEASE SAY 'YES'! I'VE BEEN SO LONELY SINCE MY HUSBAND DIED LAST YEAR AND LEFT ME WITH ALL THIS USELESS WEALTH...
CHOKE..
...SHOWED THEM HER JEWELS ..HER GOLD...
USELESS, I SAY... BECAUSE WHAT GOOD IS MONEY IF IT CAN'T BUY HAPPINESS?
IT CAN BUY MEAT!
CAN IT, SIS!
NOT CANNED MEAT, HANS! NICE THICK FRESH..
KNOCK IT OFF! LISTEN!
AND IT WILL MAKE ME SO HAPPY IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME TO SPEND ALL THIS ON YOU TWO!
GRANDMA! YOU GOT A DEAL!
YEAH! WE ACCEPT!
OH...YOU'VE MADE ME SO HAPPY! IF...IF I KNEW YOU WERE COMIN' I'D'VE BAKED A CAKE!
BOINNNGG!
WHY NOT BAKE ONE NOW, GRANDMA?
I WILL! I WILL!
YOU STAY HERE, AND I'LL GO GET THE FIREWOOD! STAY RIGHT HERE, NOW...
WE'RE NOT BUDGIN', GRANNY!
NO! WE'RE SETTIN'... BUT DEF!
BUT AS SOON AS THE LITTLE OLD LADY WAS GONE, HANSEL AND GRETEL RUSHED TO HER TREASURE CHEST..
MAN! OIG THIS COOL ICE!
ALL WE DD IS GET RIO OF THE OLD BAG AND IT'S ALL OURS! NOW HERE'S THE PLAN!

SO YOU SEE, KIDDIES, THIS LITTLE OLD LADY WASN'T GETTING READY TO ROAST THE BRATS ALIVE! ALL SHE WAS DOING WAS GETTING THE FIRE STARTED IN THE OVEN TO BAKE A CAKE IN CELEBRATION OF HANSEL AND GRETEL'S COMING TO LIVE WITH HER...
THERE WE ARE... A NICE ROARING FIRE!
NOW!
...WHEN HANSEL AND GRETEL PUSHED HER IN...
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEGHH...
...AND LISTENED TO HER BURN TO A CRISP...
SHE GONE YET—CHOMP?
REAL...CHOMP...GONE!
THEN THEY TOOK ALL OF THE POOR OLD LADY'S JEWELS...
SOME HAUL!
THINK OF THE FOOD THIS WILL BUY!
AND WENT HOME TO THEIR LOVING MOTHER AND FATHER'S CABIN AND TOLD THEM THE FANTASTIC STORY THAT YOU'VE BELIEVED...
AND THAT'S IT. TO SAVE OURSELVES FROM BEING ROASTED ALIVE, WE PUSHED HER INTO THE OVEN. AND THEN WE FOUND THESE...
GOOD LORD! JEWELS! GOLD!
WELCOME HOME, DARLINGS!
...BELIEVED UP TO NOW, THAT IS! NOW, OF COURSE, YOU KNOW THE TRUE STORY OF HANSEL AND GRETEL. GRIM, EH? WELL, THAT'S THE NAME OF THIS DEPARTMENT! NEXT TIME, I'LL TELL YOU... ER... WELL... LET'S JUST WAIT AND SEE WHAT MY IDIOT EDITORS DREAM UP. NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER WHO WILL WIND UP MY REEK RAG WITH A TALE FROM HIS CRYPT OF TERROR. 'BYE, NOW! AND AS THE BOP CONSTRUCTION MAN SAID WHEN HE FOUND THE BOAT IN THE CEMENT MACHINE, "DIG THAT CRAZY MIXED-UP KID!"

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! AND NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME, YOUR *CRYPT-KEEPER*, TO *WIND UP* THE OLD BAG'S MAG. SO, SINCE YOU'VE BEEN *TUCKED AWAY* WITH A LITTLE *FAIRY TALE*... PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A *NIGHTMARE* FROM *ME!* COME... COME WITH ME TO THE LAND OF THE *OKEFENOKEE*... SOUTH... *SOUTH* OF SOUTH... WHERE VARMINT PITS AGAINST MAN, AND ONLY THE WITTIEST SURVIVE. OUR HERO WILL BE THE WITTIEST, EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST HALF-SO. THIS TALE, I CALL...

COUNTRY CLUBBING!



FAR OFF, THE SWAMPS ECHOED WITH THE BLOOD-CURDLING YELPS OF BLOOD HOUNDS. FOR ON THIS DARK NIGHT, THE CHAIN GANG WAS SEARCHING FOR ONE ESCAPED CONVICT...

AS IF IN ANSWER TO HIS WILD, BREATHLESS BABBLING, A LIGHT BREAKS THROUGH THE DARKNESS...
A SHACK! THEY'LL HAVE FOOD!

I'LL KILL 'EM . KILL 'EM DEAD! STUPID ROTTEH PEOPLE OUGHTA BE DEAD FER JUST LIVIN' IH THIS SMELLY HOG SLOP!

THIS HERE CYPRESS STICK'LL MAKE ME A GOOD CLUB!... BEAT THEIR BRAINS OUT! ...BEAT 'EM OUT DEAD!

WOMAN!...

GIMME THET...

THERE, FODD!

I'M HUNGRY!

THE CONVICT QUIVERED AND CONVULSED WITH THE EXCITEMENT OF FOOD AT LAST! FOOD... ALL FOR HIM AND NO ONE ELSE... HIM ALONE!

ALONE?
2

IT STOOD HUGE AND UGLY. IT WAS A MAN .. THE DEAD WOMAN'S MAN HIS FACE WOULD SCARE THE WITS OUT OF ANY STRIPED SKUNK...
...AND IT DID!
OH!
NOOOOO!
GIT AWAY! DOH'T TOUCH ME! I...I DIDH'T MEAN TO HIT HER! I WUZ HUNGRY...HONEST!
OWWWW! HELP!
IT'S TH' DEVIL HISSELF! I AIH'T READY FER YA YET! YA GOTTA KETCH ME! LEMME OUTA HERE!
BACK OUT INTO THE DARKNESS AND THE SWAMPS HE RAN EVEN THE HOUNDS WOULD BE BETTER FOR HIM THAN THIS GHOULISH-LOOKING MONSTER...
HEH! HEH! I CAN OUT-LEG HIM...THE STUMBLIN' IDIOT!
..YET HE STILL FOLLOWED...WITH THE CLUB!

HIS WILD RUNNING BROUGHT HIM BACK ONTO THE PATH OF THE BAYING BLOOD HOUNDS... THEIR THROATS SORE AND EAGER FOR A SWALLOW OF FLESH...
HAROOOOOOO
MY LEGS! CAN'T MOVE 'EM! I'M EXHAUSTED! NO! NO! IT'S QUICKSAND!
GOTTA PULL UP! I'LL PULL UP THIS TREE... CLIMB IT SO DOGS CAIN'T GIT ME!
AT LAST! NO MUDDY EARTH NOR DAWG KIN EAT ME!
AAEEE!
IT'S A RAT! IT'S GOT ME! HELP!
IT'S A FILTHY 'POSSUM! I'LL FLING YA TO THE DAWGS!
WHILE THEY EATCHA, I'M SKEDADLIH'!
YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE CLUB!

IF THET CRAZY CRITTER THINKS HE'S GONNA KETCH ME, HE BETTER GET A BOAT, 'CAUSE I'M TRAVLIN' ON WATER FROM HERE OUT!
THE CONVICT WADED INTO THE BLACK SWAMP WATER AFTER A FLOATING LOG THAT WOULD CARRY HIM TO FREEDOM...
CAN'T SEE TOO WELL! THIS LOG'LL DO!
GNUFFF!
'GATOR!
WITH CRAZED STRENGTH, THE CONVICT GRABBED A DANGLING VINE AND CLIMBED TO SAFETY...
'GATOR BAIT, I AIN'T GONNA BE!
SNOP!
...YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE CLUB!

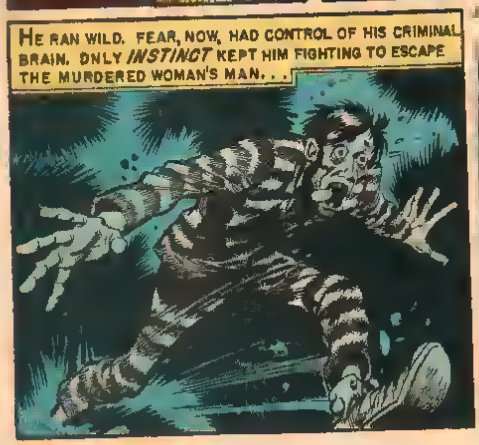
AS HE UNTANGLED HIMSELF FROM THE VINES THAT TWISTED AROUND HIS ARMS AND LEGS, ONE VINE BEGAN TO SLOWLY MOVE...
GOOD LORD! A SNAKE!

TRUE! IT WAS A SNAKE — A LONG, BROWN AND YELLOW COTTONMOUTH SNAKE, AND IT SANK ITS TEETH INTO THE CONVICT, EJECTING ITS STORED UP VENOM...
YOU DID IT! YOU BIT ME! YOU @W!?#*!% I'LL TEACH YA!

IN HIS FIT OF FEAR AND ANGER, HE BEAT THE REPTILE TO DEATH...
I'LL KILL YA! KILL YA! KILL YA!

SUDDENLY, THE SWAMP ANSWERED BACK TO HIM WITH A WILD HUM OF GNATS AND MOSQUITOES...

...FOLLOWED BY PURSUING BATS, FLAPPING AND FRIGHTNING THE CONVICT DEEPER INTO THE SWAMP...


HE RAN WILD. FEAR, NOW, HAD CONTROL OF HIS CRIMINAL BRAIN. ONLY INSTINCT KEPT HIM FIGHTING TO ESCAPE THE MURDERED WOMAN'S MAN...

YET HE STILL FOLLOWED WITH THE CLUB!

THE OKEFENOKEE HAD NOW SAPPED ALL OF HIS ENERGY. HE COULDN'T GO ON. THIS WAS IT...
HE'S GONNA GET ME...GET ME LIKE I GOT NIS WIFE!
I'M SORRY! I DION'T MEAN TO HURT HER! LET ME LIVE! I OON'T WANTA DIE! OON'T USE TH' CLUB!
STAY AWAY! KEEP AWAY! OON'T KILL ME! IT'LL BE MURDER! YOU'LL BE A MURDERER!
HELP! PLEASE HELP!
UH..HERE'S YA CLUB, MISTUH! YA FERGOT AN' LEFT IT WAY BACK AT MUH HOUSE!
I...EH, EH...I FORGOT MY...EH, EH... CLUB. ISN'T THAT...EH, EH...FUNNY? I... EH, EH...FORGOT MY...EH, EH, EH, EH, EH...
AND SO WE LEAVE OUR CONVICT FRIEND...JIBBERING AWAY...A RAVING MANIAC DEEP IN THE OKEFENOKEE. SOMETHING JUST...SHALL WE SAY...SNAPPED, WHEN THE BIG SLOB PRACTICED HIS SOUTHERN OKEY NOSPITALITY...WHICH IS ALWAYS RETURN THINGS THAT AIN'T RIGHTFULLY YOURS.' WELL THAT ABOUT WINDS UP O.W.'S MORBID MAG WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY YOURS. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, TALES FROM THE CRYPT! OH, BY THE WAY, DID YOU FORGET ABOUT THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB? NO? HMMM! THAT'S TOO BAD! 'BYE, NOW... E.C., THAT IS!
7

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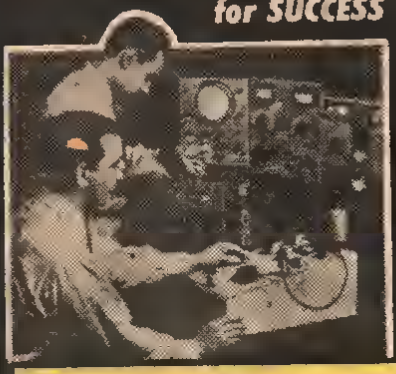

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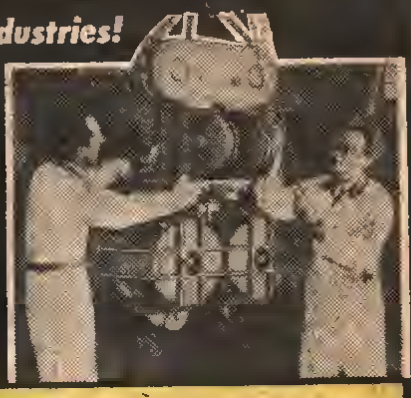

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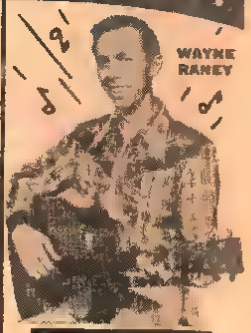

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